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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/797,082	03/11/2004	Hirofumi Onishi	250238US3	4350
22850	7590	06/20/2005	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			BONCK, RODNEY H	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	3681
DATE MAILED: 06/20/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/797,082	ONISHI ET AL.	
	Examiner Rodney H. Bonck	Art Unit 3681	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 August 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 11 March 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 03/11/04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

The following is a first action on the merits of application Serial No.10/797,082, filed March 11, 2004. The substitute specification, claims, and abstract submitted August 2, 2004 to correct the line spacing have been entered.

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

Receipt is acknowledged of the Information Disclosure Statement filed March 11, 2004. The cited document has been considered.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the second fitting portion of the second coupling member functioning as the first stopper member, as called for in claim 6, must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered. Note, too, that it is questioned whether the "spacer" of claim 4 is shown. It is assumed, however, that element 76, referred to as a "clamping plate" can be considered a "spacer" as claimed.

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Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it exceeds the 150-word limit. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The

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abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. There does not appear to be an adequate description of how applicant proposes to make the second fitting portion of the second coupling member function as the first stopper member in the combination as defined in independent claim 1.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims do not define what would be considered

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"a leading end of a first fitting portion", line 16 of claim 1. It appears that claim 6 is inaccurate in describing the second fitting portion of the second coupling member as functioning as the first stopper member. It is unclear what is meant by reciting in claim 8 that "the first coupling member is integrally secured except at the first fitting portion to the case".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Braford('272) in view of Ordo('294). Braford discloses a tandem

frictional engagement device having a first frictional engagement unit coupling a first coupling member 16 to a first coupled member 28 wherein a friction disc 25 and another friction disc 26 are clamped between piston 32 and a first stopper member 37. A second frictional engagement device has a second frictional engagement unit coupling a second coupling member 18 to a second coupled member 52 wherein a friction disc 53 and another friction disc 48 are clamped between piston 56 and a second stopper member 44. The first coupling member 16 and the second coupling member 18 are constructed separately. The leading end 44 of the first fitting portion of the first coupling member 16 is disposed to substantially abut the second fitting portion of the second coupling member 18. The leading end of the first coupling member is used as the second stopper member. The pistons in Braford do not act in opposite directions as called for in the claims. Ordo shows a tandem frictional engagement device wherein the pistons act in opposite directions. It would have been obvious from Ordo to position the pistons in Braford to act in opposite directions, the motivation being to simplify the structure of the first coupling member 16; or, alternatively, it would have been obvious to provide the first coupling member as the second stopper member in Ordo, the motivation being to reduce the number of parts. In Braford, element 46 can be considered the claimed "spacer". Note that the leading end 44 of the first fitting portion in Braford would inherently have higher axial rigidity than first stopper member 37.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Braford('272) in view of Ordo('294) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of

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Tanizawa et al.('687). The Braford device lacks the drain port called for in this claim. The Tanizawa et al. device shows a tandem frictional engagement device having drain ports 53, 54. It would have been obvious to provide drain ports in the coupling members of Braford, the motivation being to permit the free outward flow of cooling lubricant.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Cole('517) shows another tandem frictional engagement device. Neumann('272) is cited to show the mounting of first and second coupling members 128, 182. Onishi et al.(WO 2003/106868 A1) is cited to show element 72 forming the stopper for coupling unit C2.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rodney H. Bonck whose telephone number is (571) 272-7089. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00AM - 3:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles A. Marmor can be reached on (571) 272-7095. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Rodney H. Bonck
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3681

rhb
June 15, 2005